GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS

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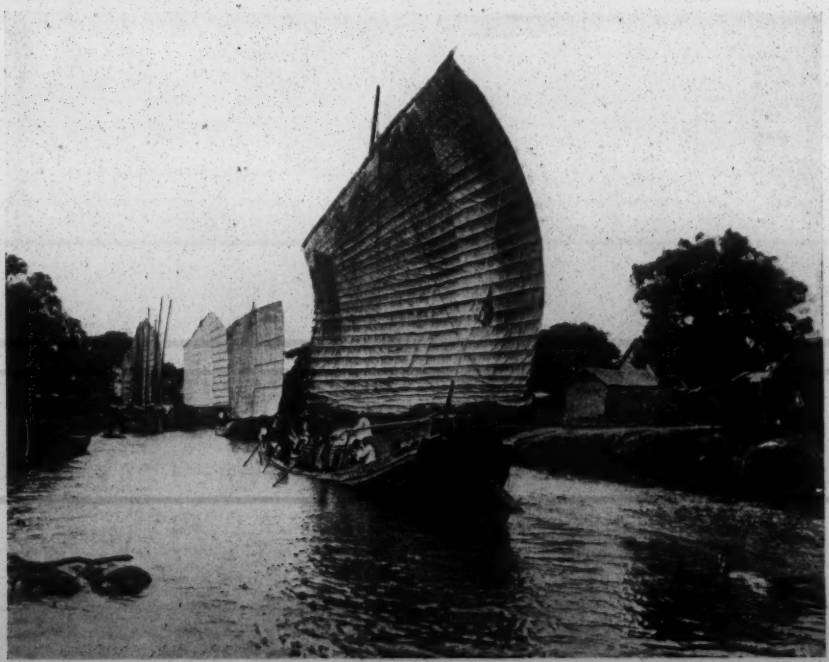

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TYPE OF JUNK IN WHICH CHINA MOVES ITS PRODUCTS

(See Bulletin No. 1)

HOW TEACHERS MAY OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

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The Strange Sights of Foochow

AN AMERICAN destroyer recently was dispatched to Foochow, China, to protect the interests of the American colony of about two hundred residents. A few days later Foochow surrendered to the army of the Cantonese forces. These forces are moving north with Peking as the objective.

What strange sights in Foochow were in store for anyone aboard that destroyer!

A city of more than 600,000 people, but one which has no wheeled vehicles on its streets. A city 34 miles from the sea, but one which has no railroad. A city where the charm of ancient custom must be weighed against the evils and odors of an antique sewage disposal system.

Jasmine Tea from Foochow Factories

Yet, if one wishes a sweet-smelling spot he should seek out one of the forty-seven factories which make Foochow's flower-scented tea. These factories buy more than $400,000 worth of white jasmine flowers yearly which they use for heating with the tea leaves to produce the delicate fragrance.

To reach Foochow one sails from Hongkong or Shanghai. It lies midway between these ports. Opposite the north end of Formosa (Taiwan) the ship steams up the Min, or Snake River. But the ocean-going vessel must halt at Pagoda Anchorage, nearly 10 miles below Foochow, because, half a century ago, stoneladen barges were sunk here to repel an enemy attack.

Legend has it that the sword-and-dagger headdress of the women of Foochow is a reminder of a siege when China was a group of petty, warring states and her men went forth to fight an army of invaders. When the men were driven back inside the city walls the women seized their weapons. They sallied forth to fight a glorious victory over the astonished marauders.

A Chair Is a Taxi in Foochow

Above Pagoda Anchorage the visitor finds a river traffic problem as acute as the automobile congestion of an American city. Gone are the tea-clippers, the ships that carried the name and aroma of Foochow to London tables. Gone are the famous Foochow pirate craft. But in the vessel-mass one still discerns the sea-going junks with sterns as high as those of the old Spanish galleons and curious up-river craft which push through the rivers and canals of Fukien province. These jostle for places alongside houseboats of ancient design and bright, new steam launches.

When a small boat lands you at a Foochow wharf it still is 3 miles overland to the vine-grown, towered walls of the old city. No taxis await your signal, no cabs, not even a jinrikisha. Only the native chairs carried on stalwart shoulders are available. The streets of the ancient city are too crooked, too badly paved, and too narrow for even the most primitive sort of vehicles on wheels.

Ancient as Foochow seems to the western world, it is a sort of Wild West in the eyes of Peking or Canton. In the days of Confucius, China proper looked upon the province that now is Fukien as a region of barbarians. The walled

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THE WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS TOBOGGAN SLIDE

This is Cresta Run, at St. Moritz, Switzerland, known as "battledore and shuttlecock" because the coaster is tossed about by a series of corners, curves and grades, no two of which are alike (see Bulletin No. 5).

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Mahogany: Wood of Prized Antiques

"ANTIQUE" has become a magic word in the United States. Every town and many villages have their antique shops.

"Solid mahogany," generally says the antique dealer, when one inquires about a beautiful old chair or table. Sometimes the prize antiques will be "solid walnut" or "birdseye maple," but more often they are warm, red mahogany.

Mahogany, queen of furniture woods, holds a scepter and has held it for two centuries. There have been hundreds upon hundreds of competitors. Where is mahogany's power? White pine has a softer and more even grain. Oak is sturdier. Other woods can be stained to resemble mahogany's natural warm, reddish tone. Teak is superior for carving. Circassian walnut and hard maples often show far more entrancing figure. (Figure is a tree's autobiography revealed in the grain at a smooth polished surface.) Mahogany's position rests in part on the characteristic entwining light and dark ribbons which play like the tones in watered silk.

The Virtues of Mahogany

The flowing surface which, properly finished, mahogany presents to the eye, constantly changing, constantly glowing, almost lifts it out of the class of lifeless things. It is a quality which mahogany shares with few other woods. But that is not mahogany's only recommendation. Not many other woods resist warp like mahogany, another outstanding virtue in the mind of the cabinet maker. Mahogany also glues well. The tree takes up its residence deep in the tropical forest so that it has been saved from extermination. Mahogany trees are far enough away to excite men's interest and yet near enough and abundant enough to be useful.

The United States imports mahogany from the West Indies, Central America, South America, Africa, France, England and Holland. But, of course, the imports from France, England and Holland are reshipments of mahogany received from colonies of those nations. What is known as true mahogany comes exclusively from countries bordering on the Caribbean Sea. The mahogany limit touches the tip of Florida. Mahogany grows all over Cuba and most of the West Indies; its region spreads along the tropical coast of Mexico and extends over most of the area of the Central American Republics. Panama has mahogany, and so has the northern coast of South America. British West African mahogany figures more largely in American imports than logs from any country except Nicaragua. It is an allied species.

Sir Walter Raleigh Introduced Mahogany to England

Britain has a foothold in British Honduras largely because of mahogany and log wood. The colony of wood choppers which was established there needed protection of the English government. In response to the choppers' needs the Empire added another bit of territory. But England probably deserves some mahogany acreage because of Sir Walter Raleigh. He introduced to Europe not only tobacco but also mahogany.

Mahogany comes by its queenly rank among cabinet woods naturally. It

city did not rise until the Ming period, which covered the years that America was discovered and colonized.

One Family Held Secret of Fine Lacquer

An effectual bar against visitors in recent decades has been the prevalence of cholera and the bubonic plague. One survey disclosed only three wells of wholesome water; the natives still rely on dirty water dipped from the river and sold by coolies.

Tea, timber and paper load down most of the outgoing boats. From up-river come many cargoes of fruit, cotton for the Foochow mills, and rice. Piled on its wharves are wheat, peas, onions, salt, silver, white plums and dates. The overland journey to Foochow is avoided even by the natives, but the Min and its branches give the city a waterway access to twenty-seven walled towns and to many smaller villages.

Foochow imports the sap of the so-called varnish tree and uses it in a lacquer of exceptional luster. One family, for many generations, held a secret process which made Foochow lacquer-ware far famed. This process required applications a dozen or more times.

A Tribe That Worships the Dog

On a mountain not far from the city one encounters the dog worshipers, easily distinguishable for the peculiar coiffure of their women; a scaffoldlike effect with a cord dangling before the face. This is worn because of a myth which holds that a dog once saved the city. The gods rewarded the dog by subjecting it to a process by which it was to become human after imprisonment for 7 times 40 days. An impatient woman lifted the cover when all except its head had been transformed and thus left a dog-headed man. In going to claim his bride his face was covered so his dog features might not offend her. So, to this day, the women of the mountain wear the headdress in honor of him, and, on New Year's day, they worship the image of a dog.

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SAMSUN'S TRAVELING BUTCHER SHOP

The meat, attached to boards arranged sandwich-fashion on a donkey, jogs along through the dust and flies, with no board of health to worry about (see Bulletin No. 3).

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Samsun to Have Better Port to Ship Turkish Tobacco

SAMSUN will get a better harbor by the terms of the concession which the Turkish Government has granted to a Swedish company in connection with a new railroad. The improvement will make it easier for Turkish tobacco to reach the United States.

Samsun needs port facilities badly. Although it is one of the principal Black Sea ports of Turkey in Asia, ships taking on or delivering freight have had to brave the perils of an open roadstead.

This place of 15,000 inhabitants lies 100 miles, in an airline, west of Trebizond and 390 miles due east of Constantinople. Cereals and olives, as well as tobacco, are grown extensively in the neighborhood, because Samsun lies in the productive delta lands of the Kizil Irmak and the Yeshil Irmak. In the days before the Christian era, when it was known as Amisus, the city was an ambitious trade rival of nearby Sinope. Now Sinope is unimportant. Its pre-war prosperity was due chiefly to the fact that it is an outlet for the rich Sivas valley, which lies 100 miles inland to the southeast. An excellent road connects Sivas with Samsun. Kaisarieh, a city due south, also employs Samsun as its water gateway to Constantinople and Russia.

The Cherry Tree Came to Europe from Samsun

Samsun, like the ancient port whose fragmentary remains are a little more than a mile distant on a promontory, has been handicapped by its poor harbor. While discharging their cargoes ships must lie off shore a distance of a mile in an open roadstead. At seasons of the year when storms are severe on the Black Sea, it is frequently impossible to take on or let off passengers.

Amisus, ancient Samsun, rose to a position of great prosperity as a trading post under the kings of Pontus. Then it handled much of the trade between Constantinople and central Asia.

When Rome took up arms against Mithradates VI, Lucullus, surnamed Ponticus for his exploits in Asia Minor, besieged and took the three maritime towns of Sinope, Amisus and Heraclea after a siege of two years. It was during this campaign that Lucullus obtained the wealth which enabled him to live in luxury when he retired to his villa at Tusculum, near Naples. A more lasting result of this conquest was Lucullus' introduction of the cherry tree into Europe from Asia. Augustus Caesar conferred upon ancient Samsun the privileges of a free city.

Old Castle Monument to Early Turks

The Ottoman sultan Mahommed I, son of Bayezid who had been defeated and captured by the Mongol prince, Tamerlane, at the battle of Angora (1402), captured Samsun. It has remained a Turkish possession since that time. An old castle, built of enormous square blocks at the base and topped by smaller ones, is a decaying monument to the early days of the city's present masters.

Bulletin No. 3, December 20, 1926.

is queen of the tropical forest. A mature tree usually rises a hundred feet to look down on the lesser tangled timber. It rules unchallenged over an acre or more of ground. The roots, resembling those of the Louisiana cypress, spread out before they reach the ground. In the wasteful old days cutters erected a platform 10 to 12 feet high to escape chopping through so much wood. Now the roots are prized for the curls and twists of their grain. So modern cutting, following logging practice in the United States, keeps close to the ground. Logs are no longer squared. That is another victory for forest thrift. In many places trains and barges have displaced the ox teams and river floods as a means of transportation to tidewater. Last year the United States imported $3,900,000 worth of mahogany, in quantity nearly nine times the imports thirty years ago.

A single mahogany log will sometimes bring as much as $3,000. No wonder that some men, entranced by the beauty of the wood, have become mahogany misers. There is a record of one such miser in England. He hoarded a few chosen logs in his cellar. On no condition would he sell them. Each day, it is said, he descended the stairs, lighting his way with a candle, and dusted the logs with a silk handkerchief. After his death the logs were sold. Some of the miser's precious mahogany found its way to America.

Masters of Furniture Design Worked in Mahogany

The old masterpiece models for modern furniture, the originals which good taste for two centuries has branded good, mostly are in mahogany. Thomas Chippendale was born in Worcester early in the eighteenth century. His family were wood-workers. He grew up to be a wood-worker also, and he became a lover of beauty. Chippendale's chairs, tables and cabinets, presented in his catalogue entitled "The Gentlemen's and Cabinet Maker's Director," revolutionized domestic furniture styles. Many Chippendale designs are duplicated today in mahogany, which he used more than any other wood.

Then along came Sheraton, minister, author, architect and cabinet maker. "Chippendale is all wrong," he said. Sheraton's style now is standard also. Then followed Hepplewhite and Company. "Sheraton is all wrong," they said. Thereupon they created the Hepplewhite style. All three masters in what is known as England's "Golden Age" of furniture-making worked chiefly in mahogany. Naturally the fact that masterpiece antiques are made in mahogany, increases the wood's popularity.

Bulletin No. 2, December 20, 1926.

Form for Renewal of Bulletin Requests

Many requests for the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS were made for the year ending with this issue. If you desire the Bulletins continued kindly notify The Society promptly. The attached form may be used:

School Service Department,
National Geographic Society,
Washington, D. C.

Kindly send.....copies of the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS for the school year beginning with the issue of....., for classroom use, to

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Address for sending Bulletins.....

City..... State.....

I am a teacher in.....school.....grade.

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A Manger in the Holy Land

MOST OF US have pitied Mary and Joseph for their poor accommodations in Bethlehem on that first Christmas. A manger in a stable to cradle a new-born babe! The anger of many centuries has been heaped on the heads of the nameless household that gave Mary and Joseph so poor a place.

John D. Whiting, a student of life in the Holy Land, in a communication to the National Geographic Society, shows that a manger was not such a bad place in which to be born. The hosts of Mary and Joseph on the first Christmas day were hospitable people. He writes:

"Many have pictured in their minds Mary and Joseph, after arriving at the 'inn' at Bethlehem and finding no room, being forced to turn into some barn built of timber, with lofty roof, hay mows, wooden mangers, and stalls for cattle and sheep. Such a stable has been the subject of many medieval and modern artists, but it does not present a really true picture. Let us consider the old-style village home that is most common in the districts around Jerusalem and Bethlehem, for that will give us a better idea of what happened on that first Christmas day.

The Kind of a House in Which Mary and Joseph Lodged

"The village streets are crooked, narrow, and unpaved. As in many of the countries of the Orient, farmers live close together for protection, and not on their lands. Therefore in the villages there are no open fields or gardens. House is next to house, except for the small walled-in inclosures or sheepfolds through which one generally passes when going into the dwelling.

"The house itself consists of one large room, usually square. The walls, from 3 to 4 feet thick, are built of blocks of stone roughly dressed and laid in mortar, roofed over with a dome, also of stone. The outside of this roof is covered with a coating of mortar made of clay, which, on being pressed with a small stone roller or pounded with a board, becomes hard and compact enough to shed the rain.

The Family Lives Near Its Stock

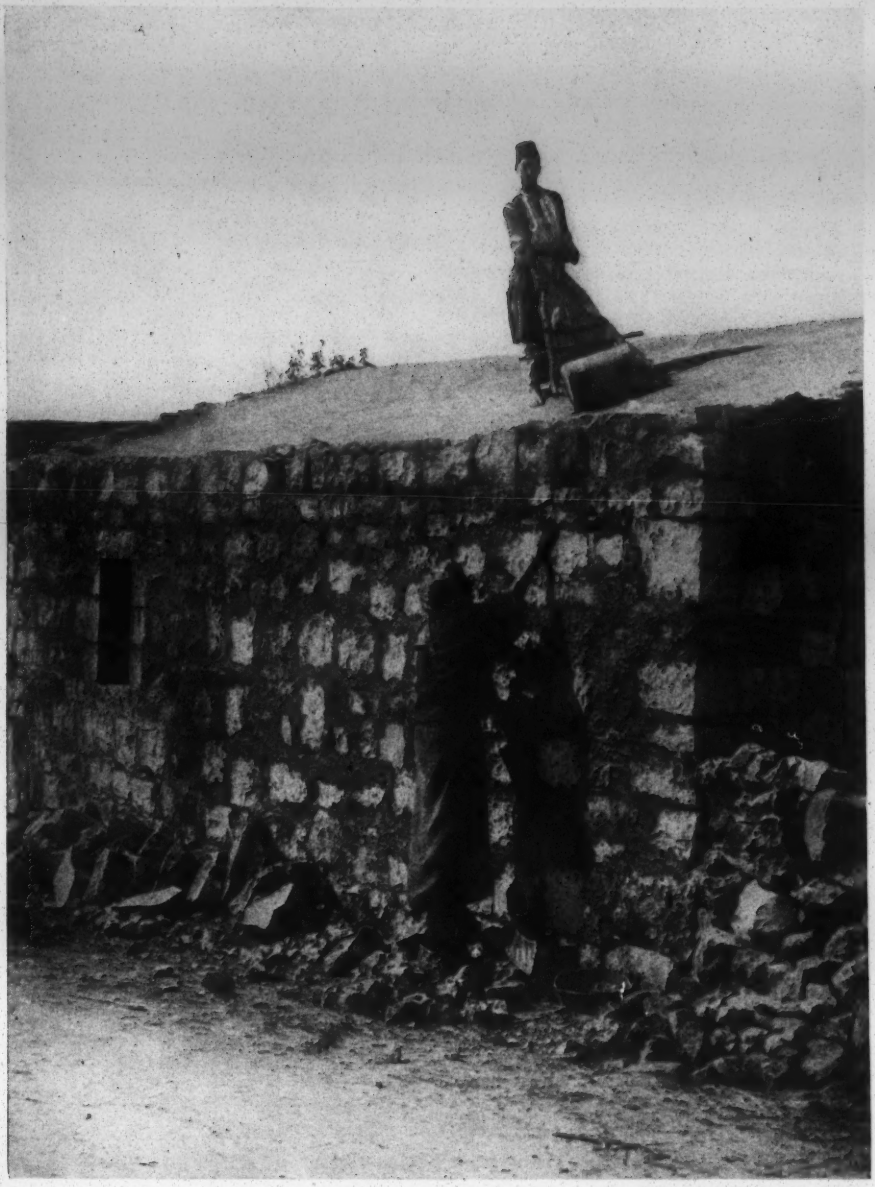
"Entering the door, we find that about two-thirds of the space is devoted to a raised masonry platform, some 8 to 10 feet above the ground and supported by low-domed arches. This raised space, called *el mastaby*, is the part occupied by the family, while the lower part is used for the cattle and flocks.

"A few narrow stone steps lead up to the *mastaby*, and a couple of small windows pierce the wall, high up from the ground. These, as a rule, are the only means of admitting light and furnishing ventilation to the entire house.

"The furniture is very simple and, as a rule, consists of a crudely decorated bridal chest in which the mother of the family has brought her trousseau; a straw mat or heavy woven woolen rug which covers part of the floor, and mattresses, with thick quilts and hard pillows, which at night are spread on the floor.

Master of the House Often Sleeps Near Sheep

"Having inspected the dwelling portion, which at once is kitchen, storeroom, bedroom and living-room, let us descend the steps into what the natives call the stable.



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ROOFING A VILLAGE HOUSE SUCH AS MARY AND JOSEPH WENT TO

"The outside of the roof is covered with a coating of mortar made of clay, which, on being pressed with a small stone roller or pounded with a board, becomes hard and compact enough to shed the rain" (see Bulletin No. 4).

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Skating and Coasting Constitute a Business at St. Moritz

WHILE winter vacationists in America are fleeing from snow and ice to Florida and California, Europe is making a general exodus to white-clad fairylands among the snows of the Alps, the Pyrenees and the Scandinavian Peninsula. Heavy garments are being packed, and skis, skates and toboggans are being made ready for the sports carnivals that begin this month.

St. Moritz, Switzerland, is the oldest and most famous of Europe's winter-sports centers. One must look closely on the map of Switzerland to find St. Moritz. It is another of those places whose fame has far outdistanced its growth in population. If your map is large enough, however, you will discover it in the eastern part of Switzerland, far down near Bernina Pass, one of the gateways into Italy.

Most of the year it is a quiet little village of fewer than 3,000 persons. Its altitude, more than a mile above sea level, helps to make its climate severe. Frosts in summer are not unknown. In fact, the natives have a couplet describing the climate of St. Moritz as, "nine months of winter and three months of cold."

Rinks Champions Come to St. Moritz

Low temperatures, of course, help winter sports. On the other hand, the cold is not so extreme that it drives away those seeking "air cures." Mineral springs have given St. Moritz more or less of a year-round vogue as a health resort. Its uniform winter weather, with dry, cold, bright days and almost no thaws, has attracted champions and enthusiasts of winter sports from all over the world to its rinks and sled-runs. In winter its population more than doubles. Even the neighboring village of Celerine, Campfer and Pontresina benefit by the overflow.

St. Moritz Dorf, or Village, nestles in a sunny, well-sheltered nook on the north bank of St. Moritz Lake, a widening of the River Inn. The mountains protect it from severe winds. With the adjacent village of St. Moritz Bad, or Bath, St. Moritz forms the largest community in the Upper Engadine district. The little groups of hotels and chalets, with tall church spires watching over them, have a pleasing aspect when seen from the many paths winding up the mountain sides. In back of every picture, too, are the serrated peaks of the Bernina Alps. Bare rocks of precipices and the blue-stained surfaces of glaciers stand out sharply against their white winter mantel.

In addition to catering to the tourist and invalid trade, the natives produce in their homes fine wood carvings, furniture, embroidery, pottery and pictures. The wood of the stone pine, which grows in great profusion around the shores of the little lake, is especially suitable for carvings. American tourists are among the chief purchasers of the latter.

A Mile a Minute on a Sled

Before the days of the airplane and the automobile St. Moritz offered the world's fastest ride. Its famous Cresta Toboggan Run, which drops nearly 500 feet in three-quarters of a mile, has been traveled at speeds more than 70 miles an hour. It is still largely a track for experts. There are other runs where

"The rest of the floor space, which is open to the ceiling, is devoted to the few work cattle and perhaps a donkey or camel. Around the walls are primitive mangers for the cattle, built of rough slabs of stone placed on edge and plastered up with mortar.

"Often the owner makes a small raised place on which he sleeps at night to enable him to keep better watch over the newly born lambs lest in the crowded quarters some get crushed or trodden down by the older ones. Here he often sleeps by preference on a cold night, for he says the breath of the animals keeps him warm.

"To have learned the hospitality of Palestine's people, which is always offered, no matter how primitive or simple, makes it easy to picture Mary and Joseph returning from the inn, already filled with guests, and turning aside into a home such as we have described, the regular dwelling portion of which may have been none too large for the family which occupied it. It may have been crowded with other guests, but they find a welcome and a resting place for the babe in a manger.

Use of Stable by Human Beings Frequent Occurrence

"Such a use of the *rowyeh,* or stable portion of the house, by human beings is not the exception, but an everyday occurrence. You can occasionally find men working their primitive looms there or the mother preparing the food or doing her little sewing near the door, where there is more light on a dark winter's day.

"We have all perhaps noticed that in the two Gospel narratives where the birth of Jesus is dwelt upon neither of them mentions a stable, barn, or anything equivalent, while Matthew, speaking of the wise men, says: 'And when they were come into the *house,* they saw the young child with Mary, his mother.' "

Bulletin No. 4, December 20, 1926.

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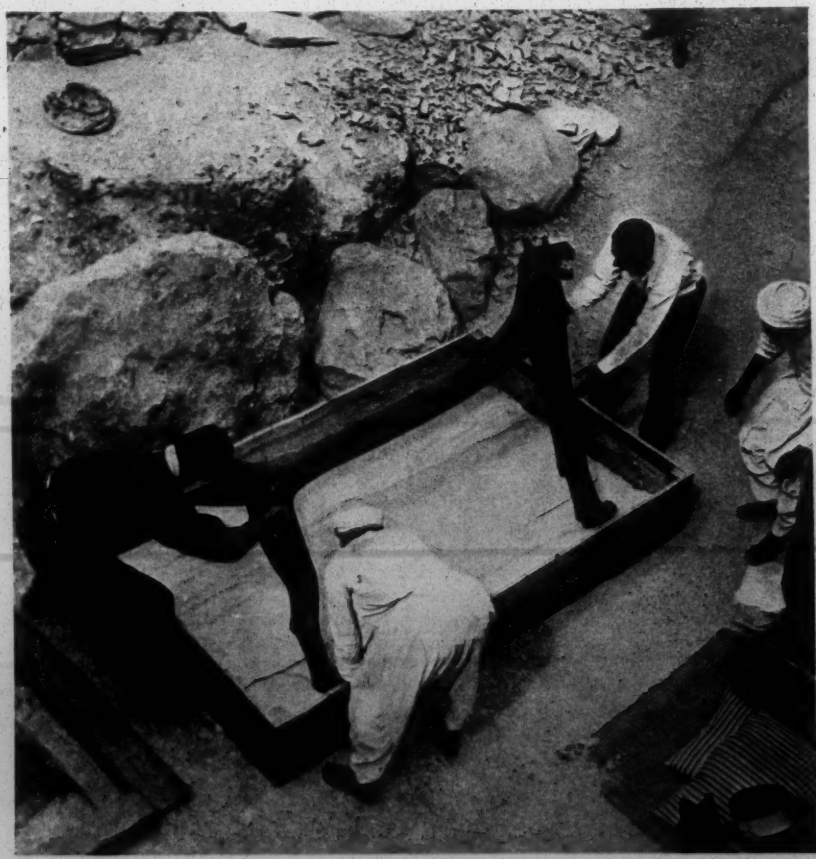
LOADING SHEEP AT SAMSUN FROM LIGHTERS

According to recent agreement with the Turkish Government, a Swedish concern will construct a harbor at Samsun to protect ships from the fury of Black Sea storms (see Bulletin No. 3).

beginners can find excitement aplenty while learning the fine points of the art. Although practically the same course has been used on the Cresta Run for the last forty years, those who have experienced, season after season, the breathless excitement of flying down its ice-surfaced, snow-banked course agree that it never loses its thrill.

There are other outdoor sports of many kinds—ski-jumping from dizzy heights; ski-kjöring on the lake, when jockies ride on skies behind their horses; hockey; ice skating; hiking; and curling matches. Often long strings of sleds and skiers are hitched to horse teams and go riding all over the snow landscape, cheering and shouting.

Strenuous sports in the crisp, bracing air make the St. Moritz day pass quickly. As the setting sun reaches the saw-edged horizon the mountain tops are transformed from dazzling white to a thousand shades of color. From the depths of the valley the blue shadows creep slowly up, until they finally engulf each rosy-capped peak. Tired but merry groups of pleasure seekers make their way to their hotels, guided by the yellow shafts the windows send sparkling over the frozen surface of the snow.



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ONE OF THE MOST ANTIQUE OF ANTIQUES

Excavators at the tomb of Tutankhamen preparing to move one side of Tutankhamen's bed. Cedar was the wood used for the larger pieces of furniture in Tutankhamen's tomb. The excavators also found some furniture in ebony. Even African mahogany was unknown to the ancient Egyptians (see Bulletin No. 2).